

Attorney's Docket No.:10559-357001/P:0034

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for dynamically grouping clients in a system~~, comprising:

storing data indicative of membership in a first group at a first client;

at a system host, transmitting a message group membership file to a plurality of clients including said first client, the message indicating whether it contains a the group membership file including information indicative of client memberships in two or more groups for the group information file , and whether it contains a client specific payload directed to a predetermined client; and

updating the data indicative of membership in the first group at the first client ~~in response to receiving the group membership file~~ if the message contains a group membership file with client memberships associated with the first client; and

processing the message at the first client if the message contains a client specific payload and the first client is the predetermined client.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the data indicative of membership in the first group comprises a first group identifier.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising:
creating the first group including two or more member clients, a member client having a client identifier;

assigning the first group identifier to the first group;
and

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associating the client identifiers of the member clients with the first group identifier in the group membership file.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein ~~the~~ each member client satisfies a criterion.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the criterion comprises client profile information.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

transmitting a message including a payload and a second group identifier;
receiving the message at the client; and
extracting the payload from the message in response to the first group identifier matching the second group identifier.

7. (Currently Amended) An article comprising:
a machine-readable medium which stores machine-executable instructions, the instructions causing a machine to:
store data indicative of membership in a first group at a client;
transmit a message to a plurality of clients including said client, the message indicating whether it contains a group membership file including information indicative of client memberships in two or more groups at a system host or whether it contains a client specific payload directed to a predetermined client; and

update the data indicative of membership in the first group at the client if the message contains a group membership file with client memberships associated with the client; and ~~in response to receiving the group membership file~~

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process the message at the client if the message contains a client specific payload and the client is the predetermined client.

8. (Original) The article of claim 7, wherein the data indicative of membership in the first group comprises a first group identifier.

9. (Original) The article of claim 8, further comprising instructions causing the machine to:

create the first group including two or more member clients, a member client having a client identifier;
assign the first group identifier to the first group; and
associate the client identifiers of the member clients with the first group identifier in the group membership file.

10. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 9, wherein each member client satisfies a ~~the criterion comprises client profile information.~~

11. (Original) The article of claim 10, wherein the criterion comprises client profile information.

12. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 8, further comprising instructions causing the machine to:

transmit a message including a payload and a second group identifier;
receive the message at the client; and
extract the payload from the message in response to the first group identifier matching the second group identifier.

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

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a memory operative to store an apparatus identifier;
a receiver operative to receive a message indicating whether it contains a group membership file or a client specific payload directed to a predetermined client in a first transmission, said file including a group identifier and two or more associated member identifiers;~~and~~
a receiver controller operative to store the group identifier in the memory in response to said apparatus identifier matching one of said member identifiers; and
a processor to process the client specific payload if the apparatus is the predetermined client.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the group membership file comprises two or more group identifiers, a group identifier associated with two or more member identifiers.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the receiver controller is operative to identify each group identifier associated with a member identifier that matches the apparatus identifier, and to update the memory to include such identified group identifiers.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said updating comprises removing a stored group identifier in response to said group identifier not being associated with the apparatus identifier in the group membership file.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the receiver is operative to receive a message including an identifier and a payload portion, and

wherein the receiver controller is operative to compare said identifier to the apparatus identifier and the stored group

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identifier and discard said message in response to said identifier not matching one of said apparatus identifier and said group identifier.

18. (Currently Amended) A system host comprising:

a memory for storing a group membership file and at least one client specific payload, the group membership file including two or more group identifiers, a group identifier associated with two or more member identifiers, the client specific payload being directed to a predetermined client;

a group generator operative to create a first group including two or more first group member identifiers that share a first criterion and associate a group identifier with the two or more first group membership identifiers in the group membership file; and

a transmitter operative to transmit a message containing at least one of the group member file and the at least one client specific payload to a plurality of client devices, two or more of said client devices having client identifiers that match the first group member identifiers, and one of said plurality of client devices being the predetermined client.

19. (Original) The system host of claim 18, further comprising:

a transmission controller operative to transmit the group membership file to said plurality of client devices at scheduled intervals.

20. (Original) The system host of claim 19, wherein the group generator is operative to update the group membership file and transmit the updated group membership file to the plurality of client devices.

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21. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a system host comprising:

a memory for storing a group membership file and at least one client specific payload, the group membership file including two or more group identifiers, each group identifier associated with two or more member identifiers, the client specific payload being directed to a predetermined client;

a group generator operative to create a first group including two or more first group member identifiers that share a first criterion and associate a first group identifier with the two or more first group membership identifiers in the group membership file; and

a transmitter operative to transmit a message containing at least one of the group member file and the at least one client specific payload; and

a plurality of clients, a client comprising:

a memory operative to store an apparatus identifier;

a receiver operative to receive the message in a first transmission and determine whether it contains a group membership file or a client specific payload in a first transmission; and

a receiver controller operative to store a group identifier in the memory in response to said apparatus identifier matching one of said member identifiers; and

a processor to process a client specific payload if the message contains a client specific payload and the client is the predetermined client.

22. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein said communication link comprises a transmission line.

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23. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein said communication link comprises a wireless communication link.

24. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein said client devices comprise set-top appliances adapted for connection to a television.

25. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein said client devices comprise hand-held wireless communication devices.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the group membership file includes a plurality of group membership identifiers associated with a plurality of client identifiers corresponding to a plurality of clients.